(c) whether the facility has been provided by the stipulated time;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when the said facility is likely to be provided to the remaining Gram Panchayats in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Out of 13510 Gram Panchayats telephone facility has been provided in 12542 villages as on 31.1.2002

(b) to (e) The private basic telephone service provider is to provide telephone facility in remaining Gram Panchayats in the State by December 2002 against the target of September, 1998.

Post offices in NER

1192. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to open post offices in tribal remote and far-flung areas of NER;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) One Branch Post Office has been opened each at Yupia in tribal area of Aurnachal Pradesh and at Rangmavin tribal area of Meghalaya and three Branch Post Offices have been opened in Sikkim State one each at Upper-Khamdong, Lunsing Ralong and Meli-Aching during the year 2001-2002

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.

(d) New Post offices and Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras are

opened subject to the fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources under annual plan activities.

IT for rural students

1193. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to provide Information Technology to the rural students in order to develop the rural areas through knowledge data base etc.; and

(b) whether Government have any scheme for scholarship for the rural students who want to pursue studies in Advanced Communication and Information Technology?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) The details are given below:—

1. Employment Generation Training Scheme (EGTS)

a. Objective of the Scheme:

Employment Generation Training Scheme (EGTS) was intiated by the Ministry of Information Technology (MIT) in 1997-98 for North East States. Subsequently, it was extended to other regions in the country for SC/ST/OBC candidates. The overall objective of this scheme is to harness the potential of Electronics and Information Technology in providing "Employment Oriented Training" for educated youth to fill up the shortage of trained personnel in the North East and other regions.

Courses Supported:

MIT support is provided to participating institutions for conducting any of the following courses:

1. DOEACC 'O' level course
2. DOEACC 'A' level course
3. Repair and Maintenance of Consumer Electronics Equipment
4. Repair and Maintenance of PC Hardware